

# A connoisseur's delight

IT is an undisputed fact that to stay for long on top of the musical ladder, especially for a Carnatic musician, is no small matter and Sudha Raghunathan deserves all the kudos for keeping up the slot for over a decade now. Backed up by a keen musical intellect, having learnt the culture of presenting a lively concert from late MLV, her guru bhakti, rigorous work, Sudha rightly deserves this position she enjoys today in Carnatic music.

Commencing the concert for Bharat Sangeet Utsav 2007 with the delectable *Sahana Varnam Karunimpa*, Sudha Raghunathan created a superb atmosphere with subtle improvisation for the charanam eduppu *Kripa Jududumi* at the *Dhaivatam* stance. With the wrapping up of Varnam, the setting for a rich musical fare was already established, a noteworthy characteristic of an accomplished artiste. Sudha presented a discerning image of the popular melody, *Amritavarshini*, with clear and controlled variation of pace, with the raga *Swarupa* immaculately emerging at every pause and ornamentation. The enunciation of the raga contours bore a stamp of originality while the style reminded one of her illustrious guru. The beautiful *Dikshitar's* piece bearing the name of the raga was beautifully rendered to be followed by an attractive *swara prasthara*. Koteeswara Iyer's 36th mela raga

Sudha Raghunathan, with her keen musical knowledge and lively rendition, set stage for a thorough musical fare at Bharat Sangeet Utsav 2007



**SUDHA RAGHUNATHAN**

kriti in *Chala Nattai*, *Yeddaiah* in Tamil, encompassing both the *shatshruti rishabham* and *Dhaivatam* was rendered charmingly.

When Sudha commenced *Khara-harapriya*, there was a keen anticipation of a sumptuous fare of the raga delineation, which she is normally very capable of, in the air. The opening contours of the raga were tidy and well defined. But, somewhere, her concentration seemed to stray, and that resulted in executing a galore of mere sangathis and the plot of the beautiful *Hara-priya* text became elusive. That artistes are not mere apparatus to churn out inspiring music all the time, however capable and equipped they may be, was evident.

*Pakkala nilabadi goliche muchata* and the attendant *Neraval* at *Manasuna dalachi mei marachi* for the Thyagaraja composition was very competently rendered, while the *swara prasthara* had ample measure of *kanaku* aesthetically drawn in the *Misra chapu* pattern.

Sudha Raghunathan teamed with MR Gopinath on the violin who produced some fine touches of *Amritavarshini*. Palladam Ravi on mridangam and R Raman on morsing maintained the tempo of the concert all through in the precise state of delight. The *Yamunakalyani Dasar padam* was a fitting finale to the well-designed concert.

— MS Jayaram